

REMARKS

Claims 1-7, 9, 11-14, 16-18, and 20-22 are pending herein. By this Amendment, claim 8 is canceled. Claims 1 and 17 are amended to recite subject matter previously recited in claim 8. Claims 12 and 13 are amended to depend from claim 11 instead of canceled claim 8.

Paragraph [0036] is also amended to correct typographical errors and thereby more properly identify aspects of the invention set forth in Fig 1. Support for the amendment is found in Fig. 1.

Accordingly, no new matter is added by this Amendment.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant gratefully acknowledges that the Patent Office has indicated that the subject matter of claims 2, 8, 12 and 13, if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, is allowable subject matter.

By this Amendment, Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 17 to recite the subject matter of claim 8, support of which is also found in the specification at paragraph [0036] and the drawings.

II. Claim Rejections under 35 USC §102

A. Claims 1, 3, 9, 11 and 14 and 16

Claims 1, 3, 9, 11, 14 and 16 were rejected by the Patent Office under 35 USC §102 (a and e) as allegedly being anticipated by US Patent Publication No. 2003/0115767 to Wedekind et al. (hereinafter "Wedekind"). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

By this Amendment, claim 1 has been amended to recite the subject matter of claim 8. The Patent Office has indicated that claim 8 recites allowable subject matter. As claim 1 has been amended to recite the subject matter of claim 8, Applicant submits that claim 1 is allowable.

Claims 3, 9, 11, 14 and 16 are dependent on claim 1. As claim 1 now recites subject matter that the Patent Office has indicated to be allowable, dependent claims 3, 9, 11, 14 and 16 should also be allowable.

As independent claim 1 has been amended to recite allowable subject matter, Applicant submits that Wedekind fails to anticipate the present invention. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

III. Claim Rejections under 35 USC §103(a)

A. Claims 1, 3-6, 9, 11, 14, 16-18, 21 and 22

Claims 1, 3-6, 9, 11, 14, 16-18, 21 and 22 were rejected by the Patent Office under 35 USC §103(a) as allegedly being obvious over U.S Patent No. 5,922,157 to Snider (hereinafter "Snider") in view of Wedekind. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

By this Amendment, independent claims 1 and 17 have been amended to recite the subject matter of claim 8. The Patent Office has indicated that claim 8 recites allowable subject matter. As independent claims 1 and 17 have been amended to recite the subject matter of claim 8, Applicant submits that claims 1 and 17 are allowable.

Further, claims 3-6, 9, 11, 14 and 16 are dependent upon independent claim 1. As claim 1 recites allowable subject matter, dependent claim 3-6, 9, 11, 14 and 16 should also be allowed.

Claims 18, 21 and 22 are dependent upon independent claim 17. As claim 17 recites allowable subject matter, dependent claim 18, 21 and 22 should also be allowed.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that Snider and Wedekind, whether taken singly or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the subject matter of claims 1, 3-6, 9, 11-14, 16, 18, 21, and 22 of the present application. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

B. Claim 7

Claim 7 was rejected by the Patent Office under 35 USC §103(a) as allegedly being obvious over the combination of Snider in view of Wedekind as applied above, and allegedly taught by US Patent No. 5,577,328 to Kerry, Sr. (hereinafter "Kerry"). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Claim 7 is dependent upon claim 1. Thus, claim 7 includes all the limitations of independent claim 1. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended to recite the subject matter indicated by the Patent Office to be allowable. As such, as claim 1 recites allowable subject matter, so too does dependent claim 7 recite allowable subject matter.

Thus, for the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that Snider, Wedekind, and Kerry, whether taken singly or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the present invention.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

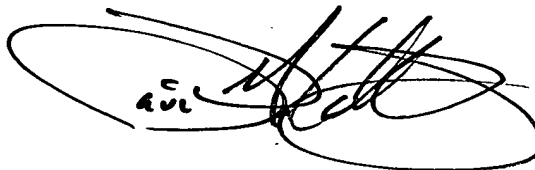
IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-7, 9, 11-14, 16-18, and 20-22 are earnestly solicited.

Application No. 10/822,796
Amendment dated October 27, 2005
Reply to Office Action of July 27, 2005

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Lafkas', enclosed within a large, loopy oval shape.

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DML/hs

Date: October 27, 2005

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